

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
RARE BIRD RECORDS  
DECEMBER, 2002 - FEBRUARY, 2003

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period December, 2002 - February, 2003. I've compiled observations for species which are listed as **Sporadic, Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A "?win" indicates a species which is documented for the park but not in the winter season.

A welcome change this winter has been the regular appearance of rain through the season. Overall, temperatures were very mild, with no hard cold fronts and, for the first time in several years, no measurable snowfalls. Some of the coldest weather for the period didn't occur until February when two cold, wet fronts passed through. The last front (February 21-23) was a little bizarre, bringing hard winds, cold temperatures, thunder and lightning, and a light dusting of snow in the highest elevations. A comparison of current precipitation totals through February with the same period last year (+ or -) illustrates the recovery from drought conditions a year ago: Panther Junction; 1.45" (+1.31"), Chisos Basin; 1.82" (+1.70"), Rio Grande Village; 1.50" (+1.49"), Castolon; 1.07" (+1.04"), and Persimmon Gap; 1.61" (+1.42").

The mild and wet conditions were conducive to good wintering bird populations, particularly flycatchers, bluebirds, mimids, and sparrows. Birders on the annual Christmas Counts (December 28-29) noted improved food crop conditions, and species and individual numbers were up over the previous year.

Highlights for the season included some unusual species for the Christmas counts - eared grebe, gray catbird, Townsend's and hermit warblers, and purple finch. Brown creeper observations were unusually high this winter, and Eastern and mountain bluebirds made good showings at lower elevations. Townsend's solitaires were present in good numbers late in the period in the Chisos. A number of gray catbirds were very unusual this winter, with one individual over-wintering at Panther Junction from December 2 through February 9. Sage thrashers also returned this winter, after a marked absence last year.

Kelly Bryan has been having entirely too much fun with his retirement, running around performing bird surveys throughout the park, and reporting some very interesting sparrow observations (Cassin's, sage, grasshopper, and a possible LeConte's) in the low desert scrub/grassland areas. He had a real plum in an immature **northern goshawk** at Castolon on February 14<sup>th</sup>. The last accepted record of this review species was an immature at Sam Nail Ranch on September 9, 1999. Finally, just for grins, Kelly found the season's only winter wren, singing no less, at the Barker house on the same day. We should all retire and follow Kelly's lead...

There were several reports of unusual species during the period, all of which lacked sufficient detail or any follow-up reports to confirm the observations. Short-tailed hawk 2 miles south of Dugout Wells on 2/14 (first documented park record was 4/28/02:Benesh); two pauraques along the Boquillas Canyon road on 2/05, (no previous records); Bendire's thrasher at RGV on 1/25 (nine previous reports but none documented/accepted): eastern towhee in the Chisos Basin on January 2 (only accepted Trans-Pecos record March 4-22, 19987 in El Paso County - per Peterson & Zimmer); and a summer tanager at Sam Nail Ranch on 1/19 (?winter).

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<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Eared grebe	1	12/29	CBC-RGV	Kathy McCormack	rare
Ross's goose	1	12/16	Terlingua Creek	Clark Lourien	acc.
Ruddy duck	2	02/13	Boquillas Cyn Overlook	Tom VandenBerg	acc
<b>Northern goshawk</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>02/14</b>	<b>Castolon</b>	<b>Kelly Bryan</b>	<b>acc.</b>
<b>*Review Species: Report/photos to TBRC:Lockwood pending review. Accepted by TBRC - 8/03</b>					
Crested caracara	1	12/18	Hot Springs Trail	Karen Bonnet	acc.
Burrowing owl	1	01/02	Glenn Spring Rd	Karen Russell	?win
Long-eared owl	2	01/04	Gano Spring	Tom VandenBerg	rare
	4	02/17	Trap Spring	Andrew, Connor Rene Franks	rare
Black-chinned Hummingbird	1m	02/14	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	early
Anna's Hummingbird	3-4	11/19-1/20	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	Tom VandenBerg	rare
	1m	02/24	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
Green kingfisher	2m,f	12/1-31	RGV-Nature Trail	many observers	rare
Williamson's Sapsucker	1m	02/28	Southwest Rim	Jamie Granger Brian Cook	acc.
Gray flycatcher	1	02/06	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
Ash-throated Flycatcher	3	12/29	CBC-RGV	Several observers	spo.
	1	01/17	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	spo.
Blue-headed vireo	2	02/09	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
Warbling vireo	1	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	Kathy McCormack	?win
Western Scrub-jay	3	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	K.Stinnet	spo.
	1	02/09	Basin oxid. Ponds	Mark Flippo	spo.

Chihuahuan raven	2	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	M.Adams,M&M Eastman L.Long	rare
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<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Brown creeper	1	12/15	RGV-Daniels Ranch	John Caufield	spo.
	2	12/28	CBC-RGV Circle	several observers	spo.
	1	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	K.Beckwith,M.Flippo K.Stinnet	spo.
	1	01/11	RGV-Daniels Ranch	Mark Flippo	spo.
	1	01/17	RGV-RV camp	Mark Flippo	spo.
Winter wren	1	02/14	Barker House	Kelly Bryan	acc.
Mountain bluebird	~50	02/10	Maverick	Bill Bourbon	spo.
	10	02/17	Panther Junction	Dan Muntean	spo.
Gray catbird	1	12/02-2/09	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	acc.
	1	12/24	RGV-Nature Trail	John McCormack	acc.
	1	02/13	Barker House	Kelly Bryan	acc.
	1	02/08	Chisos Basin	Richard Palmer	acc.
	1	02/28	Panther Junction	Tom VandenBerg	acc.
Sage thrasher	11	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	several observers	spo.
	1	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	M.Flippo,K.Stinnet	spo.
	1	1/01-2/28	parkwide	Many observers	spo.
Townsend's Warbler	2	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	Kathy McCormack	spo.
Hermit warbler	1	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	Kathy McCormack	spo.
Clay-colored Sparrow	2	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	Mark Flippo	spo.
	2	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	M.Adams.M&M Eastman L.Long	spo.
	1	02/09	Basin oxid. Ponds	Mark Flippo	spo.
Sage sparrow	1	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	Mark Flippo	spo.
	1	02/13	Maverick Road	Kelly Bryan	spo.
	Several	02/13-28	Fossil Bone/Hart Ranch Rd	Kelly Bryan	spo.
Grasshopper					

Sparrow	4	02/13	Fossil Bone	Kelly Bryan	spo.
Lark bunting	116	12/28	CBC-Chisos Circle	several observers	spo.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Fox sparrow	1	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	K.Beckwith,M.Flippo K.Stinnet	spo.
Song Sparrow	9	12/29	CBC-RGV Circle	several observers	rare
Dark-eyed junco (Slate-colored)	1	02/09	Basin Oxid. Ponds	Mark Flippo	rare
Purple finch	3m,f	12/09	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	acc.
	3m,f	12/29	CBC-Chisos Circle	Kathy McCormack	acc.
Cassin's finch	2m,f	01/19	Sam Nail Ranch	Susan Townsend	spo.

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
RARE BIRD RECORDS  
MARCH - MAY 2003

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period March 1 - May 31. I've compiled only those observations for species which are listed as **Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A "?spr" indicates a species which is documented for the park but not in the spring season.

On the heels of a wet and mild winter season, the 2003 spring season brought somewhat less rain than hoped for initially and hotter temperatures earlier than expected. Sporadic March rains kept the landscape greener than brown, while April dried up and saw temperatures rise to near the 100 degrees mark. May entered hot, dry, and windy but closed out with welcome rainstorms, helping to push annual rainfall totals closer to average. Year to date precipitation, as compared to ytd totals through May 2002 (+ or -) is as follows: Panther Junction; 2.60 " (-0.69"), Chisos Basin; 3.87" (+1.77"), Rio Grande Village; 2.01" (+1.10"), Castolon; 1.52" (+1.09"), and Persimmon Gap; 2.78" (-0.33").

Observers in the field this spring season turned in reports of several review species and one hypothetical species, the latter report having the potential to move the species to the main park list. On May 07, Arizona guide Peg Abbott first heard, then spotted a **black-bellied whistling duck** in flight over the river at the Daniels Ranch pump house. The duck continued upstream into Hot Springs Canyon, calling as it flew out of sight. Though brief, the observation is in line with previous spring reports over the past several years. Peterson and Zimmer list this species as casual in the spring over the Trans-Pecos, and Bryan reports it as uncommon.

Several weeks earlier in mid-April, **dusky-capped flycatchers** and an **Aztec thrush** were reported in the Boot Canyon area. The dusky-caps have become an annual breeding bird since the first documented nesting in 2000, and were seen or heard by many observers during the spring. The Aztec thrush observation by Overton, if accepted, will be the first documented sighting of this species in the park since 1982. Follow-up visits by several observers failed to relocate this Mexican species. In the first week of May, at the peak of the migration, at least three parties of birders found a **slate-throated redstart** in the vicinity of Boot Springs. The May 2-3 observations closely match three spring 2002 reports of the same species (April 25-27). This year's reports were well documented, including photographs and audiotapes. In the same period, two independent reports of a **Baird's sparrow** at the Daniels Ranch picnic area (Webster and Abbott) rounded out the flurry of review species reports for the peak migration period. Finally, two intriguing reports by the same observer of an **elegant trogon** came in on May 28-29. The reports were voice only identifications. In spite of a number of attempts by many people, no actual sight observations helped verify the report.

Other highlights for the spring include a pair of gray hawks that nested for the third year in a row at the south end of the Cottonwood campground. The pair of common black-hawk returned to Rio Grande Village for the 8<sup>th</sup> year in a row, utilizing the same grove but now on a new nest. The hawks arrived around March 13, the grove was cordoned off soon after, and the pair began sitting tight on the nest around April 13. On June 2, Melissa Powell observed and photographed a downy nestling. As of this writing, the chick is doing fine. Many observers saw painted redstarts this spring. It appears at least two, and possibly three pairs, are nesting in the Boot Canyon.

Peregrine falcons were monitored through the season, and will continue to be watched until fledging is completed. At the time of this report no numbers were available on the number of eyries within the park. John Maresh of the TP&WD will perform the annual black-capped vireo survey again this year, sometime in the first week of June.

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
RARE BIRD RECORDS  
MARCH - MAY 2003

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Least bittern	1	3/31	RGV-Nature Trail	Linda Clark	rare
Tri-colored heron	1	4/09	RGV-Nature Trail	S.Wilkinson D. Axt	rare
Black-crowned night-heron	1	4/13	RGV-Nature Trail	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	3/31	RGV-Nature Trail	Linda Clark	rare
	2	4/09	RGV-Nature Trail	S.Wilkinson	rare
	2*	4/13	RGV-Nature Trail	Mark Flippo	rare
	2	4/15	RGV-Nature Trail	Peter Debes	rare
	1	4/16	Talley	Melissa Powell	rare
	1	4/18	Solis	Melissa Powell	rare

\*2 adults carrying nesting material: no nesting records for park; presence of juveniles in summer of 2002 suggested probability.

**Black-bellied  
Whistling-duck**      **1**      **5/07**      **Rio Grande Vill.**      **Peg Abbott**      **hyp.**

**Hypothetical: Detailed report pending.**

Bufflehead	4m,f	4/13	Hot Springs	Mark Flippo	rare
Common black-hawk	1	3/13	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	rare
	2*	3/13-31	Rio Grande Vill.	Many observers	rare
	2*	4/01-30	Rio Grande Vill.	Many observers	rare
	2	5/01-31	Rio Grande Vill.	Many observers	rare

\* at same nest area used in 2002 season, but on new nest. Area near nest closed off on 3/20 to prevent unnecessary intrusion. Hawks on nest with eggs (?) from ~4/13.

Common Black-hawk (Other than RGV)	1	4/07	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
Gray hawk	1	3/24	Cottonwood Camp.	Bob Adams	unc.
	2	4/01-5/31	Cottonwood Camp.	Many observers	unc.
	1	4/24	RGV-Daniels Ranch	Bill Carlson	unc.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Merlin	1f	4/07	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
Forster's tern	1	5/11	Hot Springs	David Elkowitz	acc.
Rock dove	1	4/16	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
Eurasian collared Dove	1	3/04	Croton Springs	Karen Poole	acc.
	1	4/24	Rio Grande Vill. Blackhawk grove	Charles and Linda Salmon	acc.
Magnificent Hummingbird	1m	5/02	Boot Springs	Charles Lyon Tom VandenBerg	rare
<b>Elegant Trogon</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>5/28-29</b>	<b>Green Gulch</b>	<b>Larry Norris</b>	<b>acc.</b>
<b>*Texas review species: Voice only identification. Unconfirmed.</b>					
Cordilleran Flycatcher	1	4/26	Pine Canyon	Tom VandenBerg	rare
<b>Dusky-capped Flycatcher</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>4/16</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>Joshua Clark</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>1*</b>	<b>4/19</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>Eric Carpenter</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>1*</b>	<b>5/02</b>	<b>Boot Spring</b>	<b>Tom VandenBerg</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>1*</b>	<b>5/03</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>Mark Adams Eric Carpenter Mark Lockwood</b>	<b>acc.</b>
<b>*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood. Accepted 10/14/03</b>					
Brown-crested Flycatcher	1	4/16	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	5/07	Rio Grande Vill.	Peg Abbott	rare
Great Kiskadee	1	4/24-25	RGC-campground	J.Smitlaan,R.Oliver	acc.
Tropical/Couch's Kingbird	1	4/21	Cottonwood Camp.	J.Hines	rare
Tropical kingbird	1	4/28	Cottonwood Camp.	Jan&Will Risser	rare
	2	5/03	Cottonwood Camp.	Richard Webster	rare
	1	5/14	RGV-Nature Trail	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	5/24	Boquillas Cyn	Bill Carlson	rare
Eastern kingbird	1	5/19	Terlingua Abajo	Bill,Sarah Bourbon	rare
	1	5/20	Cottonwood Camp.	Otto Peter	rare



<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Black-capped Vireo	1	4/27	Blue Creek	Jay Carisle	rare
	4m,f	5/01	Juniper Canyon	Jim&Lynne Weber	rare
	1f	5/19	Green Gulch	Mark Flippo	rare
	1m	5/31	Window/Oak Spr Jct	Ruth Ganes	rare
Gray vireo	1	3/28	Blue Creek	Tom VandenBerg	unc.
	1	4/11	Blue Creek	Paul&Koni Fank	unc.
	Several	4/11-5/31	Blue Creek	Many observers	unc.
	1	5/12	Lost Mine Trail	Tom VandenBerg	unc.
	1	5/22	Green Gulch	Mark Flippo	unc.
Yellow-throated Vireo	2	3/31	RGV-Nature trail	Billie Mann	acc.
Cassin's vireo	3	5/03	Boot Springs	Mark Adams Eric Carpenter Mark Lockwood	rare
Blue-headed vireo	1m	4/16	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
Carolina wren	1	3/04	Pine Canyon	J.S. Munzinger Brian Cliff	rare
	1	4/16	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	4/30	Santa Elena Cyn	Melissa Powell	rare
	2	5/02	Cottonwood Camp.	??	rare
<b>Aztec thrush*</b>	<b>1m</b>	<b>4/18</b>	<b>Boot Canyon Trail</b>	<b>Mike Overton</b>	<b>?spg</b>
<b>*Texas Review species: report to TBRC:Lockwood. Accepted 2/27/04</b>					
Gray catbird	1	3/08-4/19	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	4/27	Basin oxid. Ponds	Nige Milbourne	rare
Sprague's pipit	1	4/07	Santa Elena Jctn	H.Lau Ruschuus	rare
Golden-winged Warbler	1m	4/27	Boot Canyon	Jim&Lynne Weber	acc.
	1m	4/30	Oak Springs	John Haynes	acc.
Tennessee warbler	1	5/03	Boot Canyon	Mark Adams Eric Carpenter Mark Lockwood	acc.
Magnolia warbler	1	5/05	Laguna Mdw. Tr.	Janet Crane	

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Black-throated Blue warbler	1m	5/05	Sam Nail Ranch	Greg Lasley	rare
Hermit warbler	sev.	4/18	High Chisos	Mike Overton	rare
	1	4/19	Boot Canyon	Eric Carpenter	rare
Yellow-throated Warbler	1	4/17	Santa Elena Cyn	Peter Debes	acc.
Palm warbler	1	5/02	Cottonwood Camp.	Jan&Will Risser C. Lyon, M. Austin	acc.
	1	5/04	Rio Grande Vill.	Richard Webster	acc.
Worm-eating Warbler	1	4/11	Dugout Wells	Mark Flippo	rare
Painted redstart	1	4/19	Boot canyon	Eric Carpenter	spo.
	2*	4/29	Boot Canyon	Jan&Will Risser	spo.
	2*	5/01	Boot Canyon	Bill Carlson	spo.
	6*	5/02	Boot Canyon	Tom VandenBerg Stan & Lori Isley	spo.
	4*	5/03	Boot Canyon	Mark Adams Eric Carpenter Mark Lockwood	spo.
	4*	5/04	Boot canyon	Greg Lasley	spo.
* Nest building					
<b>Slate-throated Redstart</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>5/02</b>	<b>Boot Springs</b>	<b>Stan &amp; Lori Isley Mike Austin Charles Lyon</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>1*</b>	<b>5/03</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>Mark Adams Eric Carpenter Mark Lockwood</b>	<b>acc</b>
*Texas Review species: report to TBRC:Lockwood. Accepted					
Baird's sparrow	1*	5/04	RGV-Daniels Rch	Richard Webster	rare
	1*	5/07	RGV-Daniels Rch	Peg Abbott	rare

\*Texas Review species: report to TBRC:Lockwood. Accepted 6/04

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Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	4/28	Cottonwood Camp.	Jan&Will Risser	rare
	1m	5/02	Dugout Wells	Bob Hall	rare
	1m	5/08	Cottonwood Camp.	Bill Carlson	rare
Lazuli bunting	1m	5/01	Cottonwood Camp.	Jan&Will Risser	rare
Common grackle	1	5/04	Rio Grande Vill.	Richard Webster	rare
	1	5/17	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
Hooded oriole	1m	4/05	Cottonwood Camp.	J. Brinkerhoff	rare
	2m,f	4/07	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
	2m,f	4/16	Cottonwood Camp.	Mark Flippo	rare
	1m	4/17	Cottonwood Camp.	Peter Debes	rare
	1m	5/25	Rio Grande Vill.	??	rare
Baltimore oriole	1m	4/25	Dugout Wells	Bill Carlson	acc.
	1m	5/03	Cottonwood Camp.	Bill Carlson Richard Webster	acc.
Cassin's finch	2m	4/09	RGV-Nature Trail	S.Wilkinson D.Axt	spo.
	1m	5/01	Boot Canyon Trail	Bill Carlson	spo.

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
RARE BIRD RECORDS  
JUNE - JULY 2003

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period June 1 - July 31. I've compiled only those observations for species that are listed as **Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A "?sum" indicates a species which is documented for the park but not in the summer season.

The good rainfall that entered at the end of May kept up through the entire summer season, including a wonderful boost from Hurricane Claudette in mid-July. That storm surprisingly maintained its integrity and force as it moved across the Big Bend, dropping over an inch and half of rain in the Chisos Mountains, and up to a half inch on the desert floor. The desert and mountains are green and vibrant with blooms, and the Boot Canyon has been flowing with a constant stream of water. Water levels in the Rio Grande have been up and down as each storm passes, providing some great opportunities for river trips if you could be at a put-in in time for the surge. Year to date precipitation as compared to ytd totals through July 2002 (+ or -) is as follows: Panther Junction; 8.47" (-0.12"), Chisos Basin; 15.59" (+9.02"), Rio Grande Village; 5.13" (+0.12"), and Castolon; 5.79" (-0.78"). Persimmon Gap; 5.30" (precipitation measurements were not recorded for July, '02).

Some of the best news this summer involves the common black-hawks at Rio Grande Village. In the spring season report I reported that the pair had hatched one egg and that a nestling was confirmed on June 4. Periodic monitoring of the nestling's progress over the season saw it finally fledge at the end of July. This is only the second confirmed successful nesting in the eight years that a pair has been utilizing the same cottonwood grove at Rio Grande Village, the first record occurring in 1999. In other related black-hawk news, it appears there is a pair frequenting an area deep in Santa Elena canyon, but no one has been able to locate a nest to date.

With all the rain and resultant wildflower blooms in the high Chisos, hummingbirds almost entirely vacated the lower elevations in mid-June, initially following the bloom of the agaves, then remaining at higher elevation to take advantage of the rain inspired mountain wildflower bloom. Rare Magnificent and a pair of **white-eared hummingbirds** in the Boot Canyon provided several observers with excellent views and resulting solid reports of this review species. Migrant rufous hummingbirds arrived in late July, but for the most part have been present only in the higher elevations. As of yet there have been no reports of calliope hummingbirds.

As in late spring (5/28-29 - Norris), two independent parties reported hearing an **elegant trogon** in late June, this time up on the Pinnacles Trail. In spite of efforts by many people, no one was ever able to actually see the bird. An unconfirmed third report, apparently also a voice-only identification, placed the trogon somewhere in the Boot Canyon shortly after the initial reports.

The high Chisos produced a number of other exciting species this summer, including **Dusky-capped flycatchers**. Present since this spring, the flycatchers were most often observed in the vicinity of the Boot Canyon backpack campsites. While no nest cavity was ever located, a pair of adults with two juveniles was observed on July 12, suggesting that this species successfully nested for the third year in a row. Other Chisos Mountains highlights included a HY golden-cheeked warbler (Lockwood 6/29) and at least two, and probably three, nesting pairs of painted redstarts in Boot Canyon.

Other warbler highlights elsewhere in the park were a Blackburnian warbler and a hooded warbler in Pine Canyon on June 2, and a black & white warbler at Sam Nail ranch one day earlier. A final review species report was of a **yellow grosbeak** at the Rio Grande Village group campground on 6/14. This Mexican species has been reported in the park several times over the years but has never been confirmed here or anywhere in Texas. The report is pending a review by the TBRC.

TPWD Researcher John Maresh returned to the park to perform a survey of black-capped vireos from June 3-10. This year he located 21 total individuals as compared to 17 last year. Breakdown of the total included 14 males (9 in '02), 5 females (4 in '02), 2 HY (3 in '02), two active nests, two family groups, one new nest start, and, encouragingly, no nest parasitism by cowbirds.

Peregrine falcon monitoring concluded in late July. During the reproductive season, a total of 12 eyrie sites were visited, one of which is a new eyrie site in the Park. Peregrines were found to be occupying 11 of the sites. At two of the sites where fledglings were observed, only one or no adult peregrine was identified. During the final stages of the reproductive season, 13 fledglings were visually confirmed from a total of 7 sites, as compared to six fledglings from five eyries last year.

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Black-crowned night-heron	1imm	6/07	Santa Elena Cyn	Dan Leavitt	acc.
White-tailed kite	1	6/14	RGV-Nature Trail	David Elkowitz	?sum
Common black-hawk	2*	6/04	Rio Grande Vill.	Missy Powell	rare
	2*	6/15	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	6/16	Santa Elena Cyn	D. Leavitt M. Powell	rare
	1	7/25	Rio Grande Vill.	Joel,Vicki Simon	rare
*Powell reports nestling 6/04.					
Flammulated owl	1	7/1-3	Boot Cyn 3 camp	Tim Roderick	rare
<b>White-eared Hummingbird</b>	<b>1m*</b>	<b>6/30</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>Carol Edwards</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>2m,f*</b>	<b>7/17</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>J.P. Valentine</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>2m,f*</b>	<b>7/19</b>	<b>Boot Cyn 3 camp</b>	<b>Nick Block Graham Gips</b>	<b>acc.</b>
<b>*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood. Accepted 10/14/03</b>					
Magnificent Hummingbird	1m	7/20	Pinnacles Trail	N.Block,G.Gips	rare
<b>Elegant trogon</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>6/24</b>	<b>Pinnacles Trail</b>	<b>John Gee</b>	<b>acc.</b>
	<b>1*</b>	<b>6/26</b>	<b>Pinnacles Trail</b>	<b>Mike Overton</b>	<b>acc.</b>
<b>*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood pending review. Voice-only identification. Not accepted first round: 10/03</b>					
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	7/30	Lost Mine Trail	Karl Overman	early?
Brown-crested Flycatcher	1	6/03	Cottonwood Camp	John Maresh	rare

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Dusky-capped Flycatcher	1*	6/03	Boot Canyon	Brandon Percival David Bradford	acc.
	1*	6/18	Boot Springs	Jason Mann	acc.
	2*	7/02	Colima 1 camp	Dan Leavitt	acc.
	1*	7/03	Boot Canyon	Tim Roderick	acc.
	4**	7/12	Boot Cyn 2-3 camp	Mark Flipppo	acc.
	1*	7/20	Boot Cyn 3 camp	N.Block,G.Gips	acc.

\*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood Accepted 10/14/03

\*\* Two adults, two juveniles.

Tropical kingbird	several	6/1-7/31	Cottonwood Camp.	Many observers	rare
	1	6/15	RGV-Campground	Mark Flipppo	rare
Black-capped Vireo	21	6/03-10	See comments	John Maresh	rare
	1m	7/12	Boot Canyon	Mark Flipppo	rare
Carolina wren	1	6/02	Cottonwood Camp.	Brandon Percival	rare
Hermit thrush	1HY	7/29	Laguna Meadow Tr.	Karl Overman	?sum.
Golden-cheeked Warbler	1HY	6/29	Pinnacles Trail	Mark Lockwood	acc.
Blackburnian Warbler	1m	6/02	Pine Canyon	Brandon Percival	acc.
Black & White Warbler	1f	6/01	Sam Nail Ranch	David Bradford	rare
Hooded warbler	1m	6/02	Pine Canyon	David Bradford	?sum.
Painted redstart	1	6/18	Boot Canyon	Jason Mann	spo.
	1	7/02	Boot Canyon	Tim Roderick	spo.
	6	7/12	Boot Canyon	Mark Flipppo	spo.
	4	7/9-20	Boot Cyn 3 camp	N.Block,G.Gips	spo.
Yellow grosbeak	1*	6/14	RGV-Group Camp.	David Elkowitz	hyp.

\*Texas Review Species: Report to TBRC:Lockwood pending review. Not accepted first round 10/03

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
RARE BIRD RECORDS  
AUGUST - NOVEMBER 2003

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period August 1 - November 30. I've compiled only those observations for species which are listed as **Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A "?fall" indicates a species which is documented for the park but not in the fall season.

This autumn season was graced with abundant rainfall, particularly during the month of October, when heavy storms filled arroyos and brought the Rio Grande roaring through the canyons. The rapid rise of the river necessitated the evacuation of both Rio Grande Village and Cottonwood Campgrounds, flooded the Santa Elena Canyon Road, and provided those lucky enough to be here with excellent rafting opportunities, an activity that has been sadly lacking over the past few years of extreme low water conditions. The Chisos Basin received almost six inches during October, prompting a press release from the park calling attention to the fact that, for the first time in eleven years, rainfall totals in the Chisos Basin had surpassed twenty inches.

A comparison of current year to date precipitation with ytd totals through November 2002 (+ or -) documents the uncharacteristically wet Fall season. Panther Junction; 15.98" (+2.30"), Chisos Basin; 24.37" (+8.54"), Rio Grande Village; 8.81"(-0.02"), and Castolon; 9.16" (+1.05").

Temperatures through the season were typically hot during August and September, with a general cooling trend beginning in October. No true cold fronts have made it this far south yet, though nighttime temperatures at Rio Grande Village have dipped into the twenties on a few occasions.

Lingering summer season birds provided the highlights of August, particularly a pair of **white-eared hummingbirds** that were faithful to the Boot Canyon campsites, and several **painted redstarts** that wandered all along the Boot Canyon drainage. Joining the above birds in August were a female broad-billed hummingbird, at least two **red-faced warblers**, and a small showing of hermit warblers. Two independent reports of a **mountain chickadee** were intriguing, given the hypothetical status of this species in the park. A known resident on the Davis and Guadalupe Mountains, mountain chickadees are absent from Big Bend, but there are at least two undocumented records for the summer in the Chisos Mountains, both from the 1970s.

Besides the broad-billed and white-eared hummingbirds, other species were well represented in the park during the season, encouraged by the flush of wildflower blooms in the wake of the good rainfalls. Lucifer and Rufous hummingbirds lingered late and one immature Anna's arrived very early to a feeder on 9/26. A report of a **berylline** near the top of the Pinnacles trail on 9/14 was very interesting and is currently under review by the TBRC. There is only one record of this species for the park (8/18/91).

Park Wildlife Tech Missy Powell, on her patrols of the North Rosillos/Hart Ranch area of the park for feral hogs, found a surprising "cluster" of burrowing owls in mid-August, and again in mid-October. Now rare in the park (one pair documented nesting in 2001) this unexpected find suggests that this little owl may be holding on in this little-visited area of the park.



<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
American White Pelican	4	11/28	RGV-Nature Trail	Jim Black	acc.
	4	11/29	Lajitas	Laird Considine	acc.
Gray hawk	2	10/05	Cottonwood Camp.	B&S. Bourbon	rare
	1	11/24	Cottonwood Camp.	Eric Carpenter	rare
Common Black-hawk	1	10/11	Santa Elena Cyn	Richard Palmer	rare
Virginia rail	1	9/05	Tank 86	Missy Powell	rare
Eurasian Collared Dove	1	11/10	Persimmon Gap	Ben Velner	?fall
Flammulated owl	2	8/09	Boot Canyon	Tim Fennell	rare
	1	8/24	Boot Springs	Ruth Games	rare
Burrowing owl	6	8/21	Hog Tank	Missy Powell	rare
	2	8/21	Burrowing Owl Tank	M. Powell	rare
	1	9/05	9 Point Draw	Missy Powell	rare
	6	10/15	N. Rosillos Road	Missy Powell	rare
Broad-billed Hummingbird	1f	8/12	Boot Canyon 2	Petra Hockey	?fall
<b>White-eared Hummingbird*</b>	<b>2m,f</b>	<b>8/01</b>	<b>Boot canyon 3</b>	<b>Eric Carpenter</b>	<b>?fall</b>
	<b>2m,f</b>	<b>8/8-9</b>	<b>Boot Canyon 4</b>	<b>Eric Carpenter</b>	<b>?fall</b>
	<b>2m,f</b>	<b>8/20</b>	<b>Boot Canyon 3</b>	<b>Kym Beckwith</b>	<b>?fall</b>
	<b>1m</b>	<b>8/23</b>	<b>Boot Canyon 2</b>	<b>Lynn Barber</b>	<b>?fall</b>
	<b>1m</b>	<b>8/31</b>	<b>Boot Canyon 4</b>	<b>Jason Leifester</b>	<b>?fall</b>
<b>*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood. Accepted 10/14/03</b>					
<b>Berylline Hummingbird</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>9/14</b>	<b>Pinnacles Trail</b>	<b>Grant Gurley</b>	<b>?fall</b>
<b>*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood. Not Accepted 12/15/03</b>					
Magnificent Hummingbird	1m	8/16	Pinnacles Pass	Mark Flippo	unc.
Lucifer Hummingbird	2m,f	10/22	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	late

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1m	8/19-31	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
	1m	10/30	Panther Junction	Rob Dean	rare
Anna's Hummingbird	1im	9/26	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
	1im	11/18-30	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
Calliope Hummingbird	1f	8/20	Boot Canyon	Kym Beckwith	rare
	1f	8/23	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
	1f	8/24	Pinnacles Trail	David Elkowitz	rare
Rufous Hummingbird	1f	10/30-31	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	late
	1f	11/21	RGV-Daniels Ranch	Mark Flippo	late
	1f	11/25	RGV-Daniels Ranch	Eric Carpenter	late
Eastern Wood-pewee	1	9/07	RGV-Campground	Mark Flippo	?fall
Red-eyed vireo	1	9/26	Pinnacles Trail	Bill Carlson	rare
<b>Mountain Chickadee</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>8/15</b>	<b>Boot Canyon</b>	<b>Tom &amp; Elyse Fuller</b>	<b>hyp.</b>
	<b>1*</b>	<b>8/31</b>	<b>Laguna Meadows</b>	<b>K.Sheridan Coffey</b>	<b>hyp.</b>
<b>*Hypothetical on park list - see notes.</b>					
Brown creeper	1	11/21	RGV-Daniels Ranch	Mark Flippo	spo.
	1	11/25	RGV-Group camp	Eric Carpenter	spo.
Carolina wren	1	9/07	RGV-Nature Trail	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	9/27	RGV-Nature Trail	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	11/21	RGV-Daniels Ranch	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	11/25	RGV-RV park	Eric Carpenter	rare
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	11/17	Window Trail	Tim Downey	spo.
Black-throated Green warbler	1f	8/09	Boot Canyon 4	Tim Fennel	rare

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Hermit warbler	2	8/23	Boot Canyon	Ruth Games	rare
	1f	8/31	Colima Trail	Jason Leifester	rare
	1	8/31	Laguna Mdw. Tr.	Rick Schaefer	rare
	1	9/26	Colima Trail	Rob Braufield	rare
Northern Waterthrush	1	9/02	Boot Canyon	Jason Leifester	rare
Louisiana Waterthrush	1	8/09	Boot Canyon	E.Carpenter T.Fennell M.Lockwood	acc.
Red-faced warbler	1*	8/06	Boot Canyon	Missy Powell Alison Freeman	spo.
	1*	8/09	Boot Canyon	Eric Carpenter Tim Fennell	spo.
	2*	8/12	Boot Canyon	Petra Hockey	spo.
	1*	8/14	Boot Canyon 2	Gloria Saylor	spo.
	1*	8/25	Boot Springs	Ruth Games	spo.
<b>*Review Species: Report to TBRC:Lockwood Accepted 10/14/03</b>					
Painted redstart	2	8/01	Boot Canyon 2	Eric Carpenter	spo.
	1	8/06	Boot Canyon	Powell,Freeman	spo.
	4	8/09	Boot Canyon 4	Carpenter,Fennell	spo.
	2	8/16	Boot Springs	Mark Flippo	spo.
	1	8/17	Boot Canyon	Gloria Saylor	spo.
	1	8/20	Boot Canyon	Kym Beckwith	spo.
	1	8/31	Boot Canyon 2-3	Jason Leifester	spo.
Indigo bunting	1f	9/16	N. Rosillos	Missy Powell	rare